



Gonorrhea

FACT SHEET

Gonorrhea...

- ...is transmitted by oral, anal, or vaginal sex with an infected person.
- ...can be transmitted to the eyes, mouth, and genitals by hand contact with infected area.
- ...may not have symptoms.
- ...can impact ability to have children in the future if untreated.
- ...can be cured with antibiotics, but a person can get it again if he or she has sex with an infected person.



What is it?

- Gonorrhea is caused by bacteria.
- It has been called the clap, drip, or GC.
- Gonorrhea can spread and cause damage to other parts of the body.

How is it transmitted?

- Gonorrhea is transmitted by having vaginal, oral, or anal sex with an infected person.
- An infected mother can pass it to her baby during birth.
- Hand contact with an infected area can transmit gonorrhea to the eyes, mouth, and genitals.

What are symptoms of infection?

- Most women and men do not have symptoms.
- Women may have yellow or white discharge from the vagina, pain with urination, heavy and painful periods, cramps and pain in the lower abdomen.
- Men may have yellow, green, or white discharge from the penis, and painful and frequent urination.
- It may cause a reddened, sore throat.
- It may cause rectal pain and blood or pus in bowel movements.
- It may cause redness and burning in the eyes and blindness.

What are other consequences of infection?

- The infection can spread and cause permanent and painful damage to the reproductive and urinary organs.
- Gonorrhea is a major cause of infection of the Fallopian tubes that can make women infertile.
- It can cause men and women to be unable to produce children.
- If untreated, gonorrhea can spread and cause pain in the joints (arthritis), heart problems, skin disease, blindness, and death.
- A woman can pass gonorrhea to her baby during birth. These babies may have pneumonia or eye problems, even blindness, unless treated.

How is it diagnosed?

- Local health departments, school-based health clinics, and other doctor's offices may offer confidential, free or low-cost testing and treatment for gonorrhea for young people.
- The only way for a person to be sure if he or she has gonorrhea is to visit a doctor or nurse and ask to be tested for gonorrhea. They will do a urine test or a pelvic exam for women and a visual examination of the genitalia for men. Also, a sample will be wiped from the infected area and tested.

Is there a treatment? A cure?

- Gonorrhea can be cured with antibiotic shots and/or pills prescribed by a doctor.
- The sex partner of an infected person must also be treated. If not, they will give it to each other again if they have sex.
- A person is not immune from gonorrhea after having it and being cured. A person can get it again.

How can it be avoided?

- Abstain from vaginal, oral, and anal sex.
- Avoid sexual contact where the genitals or hand of one person come in contact with the infected discharge of another person.